

SoTL Chronicles [Volume 2, number 1]

November 2010

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SoTL Chronicles

Volume 2, Number 1 **November 2010**
Newsletter of the SoTL at Georgia Southern Initiative

Website for SoTL at Georgia Southern Initiative

A website for the initiative is at <http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/sotl>. It will serve as the portal for the activities and resources of the initiative.

SoTL at Georgia Southern

Dr. Jean Bartels, Interim Provost



Perhaps no entity at Georgia Southern University more clearly gives life to our value of excellence in teaching than the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, or SoTL. On our campus, SoTL faculty have created a community of learning that requires educators to not only have an interest in teaching, but also be open to continuous improvement gleaned from the vigorous study of the teaching/learning process. Through SoTL, faculty create the context and structures to support a system that makes students the center of the learning experience. Their research into the teaching/learning experience helps us all better articulate an understanding of what the outcomes of student learning should be across the curriculum and validate the educational expectations, assumptions, and values that underpin our educational enterprise. Most importantly, SoTL faculty lead the way in entering partnerships with their learners, helping them to see that learning that is meaningful is learning that is collaborative, linked to shared experiences, developed over time, and continuously expanded.

Improving the quality of education in order to meet the demands, challenges, and opportunities of the future requires a faculty with internal motivation, a collaborative culture, and the continuous cycle of using outcome assessment data to improve how we teach and learn. Today's educators must take full responsibility for making learning more available to learners, helping them to make action from their knowledge—using their knowledge to think, judge, decide, discover, interact, and create. SoTL faculty clearly understand and act on this responsibility. We at Georgia Southern applaud SoTL and the SoTL scholars and thank you for your contributions to excellence in higher education.



Faculty Awards for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning: **\$oTL**

The Faculty Awards for SoTL have the purpose to encourage and recognize faculty members engaging in scholarship that focuses upon teaching and learning and then applying the results of that scholarship to courses for the improvement of student learning. The awards emphasize the integration of research about teaching and learning and the practical application of that research to the teaching and learning process. There are two annual awards of \$2,000 each provided by the Center for Teaching, Learning & Scholarship (CTLs):

Who can apply?

Permanent, full-time faculty members (tenure-track and tenured) who are in at least their second year of full-time teaching at Georgia Southern University may apply for the Award. Previous recipients are not eligible.

When is the application period?

The application period is February 9 – February 27, 2011. All applications are to be delivered to the CTLs in Suite 1303, Henderson Library. The deadline is 5 pm, February 27, 2011.

What is the application format and selection of recipients process?

See website for details: <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/sotlgsu/index.php?link=awards>

SoTL Trajectory at Georgia Southern
Dr. Alan Altany (Director, CTLS)

Georgia Southern is becoming positioned to become a **national center for the scholarship of teaching and learning** (SoTL). Since 2006 steps have been made in that direction, both in emphasizing SoTL among our own faculty, and in fostering SoTL regionally, nationally, and internationally through such things as the SoTL Symposium, SoTL Commons Conference, and the *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning*.

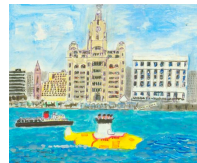
We could further develop a unique, national reputation for supporting and fostering SoTL, and assist others wanting to develop cultures for SoTL. SoTL uniquely unites research and teaching, can include all disciplines, all sorts of approaches to teaching, all kinds of higher ed institutions, faculty at all stages of their academic careers, and can be a catalyst for an extremely collegial focus for improving student learning through inquiry, research, application, and dissemination.



The SoTL Road from Statesboro to Liverpool and Back
Dr. Laura Regassa (Biology)



The 2010 International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL) Conference was held in Liverpool, England on October 19-22, 2010. This annual conference draws SoTL researchers and administrators from around the world. The 4-day 2010 conference had approximately 400 participants from 27 countries; research findings and pedagogical approaches were shared during 4 keynote addresses, ~230 talks/workshops, and a poster session.

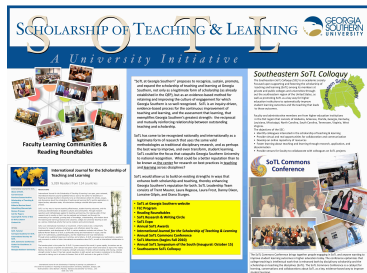


One of the emerging topics covered in depth at the conference was the idea of threshold concepts. A threshold concept is a transformative experience/concept that changes the learner's paradigm in such a way that learned concepts are now viewed in a new light, with the transition moving the learner closer to mastery of the discipline. Although the theory of threshold concepts is rather abstract, everyone has experienced or witnessed these "aha moments". The difficulty comes when trying to decide what these threshold concepts may be for a given discipline and how one would use this information to modify the curriculum to enhance learning. Threshold concepts are an emerging area of research that will continue to evolve as ongoing studies are published. For those interested, a more in-depth explanation of the theory as well as a comprehensive listing of publications can be found at <http://www.ee.ucl.ac.uk/~mflanaga/thresholds.html>.



I made a presentation at this year's conference entitled "Inquiry-based approaches facilitated learning for novice and advanced learners in Biology". The presentation highlighted research being done as part of the National Science Foundation GK-12 funded Molecular Biology Initiative Program. Next year's ISSOTL Conference will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (USA).

2nd Annual SoTL Expo



The 2nd annual SoTL Expo is scheduled for 3 – 5 pm on April 13, 2011 in the Atrium of the College of Information Technology building. It is an opportunity for Georgia Southern faculty to present posters about their SoTL work, and for members of the academic community to see the work of colleagues and talk with them about that work. The submission of proposals (blind review by members of FLCs for SoTL) schedule is

Submission of Proposals Period: February 1 - 18, 2011
Proposals Reviewed by February 28, 2011
Notification of Authors by March 4, 2011

The "2010 Virtual SoTL Expo" is available online at http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/cet/SoTL_EXPO2010.

SoTL Work of Faculty

Dr. Misty L. Loughry (Management, Marketing, & Logistics)

I traveled to Montreal, Canada in August 2010 to present my SoTL-related work at the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management. The paper, titled "The Comprehensive Assessment of Team Member Effectiveness: Development of a Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale for Self and Peer Evaluation" is the result of a long-term multi-disciplinary collaboration among the study's authors, Matthew W. Ohland (Engineering Education, Purdue University), Loughry, David J. Woehr (Management, University of Tennessee), Cynthia J. Finelli (Engineering, University of Michigan), Lisa G. Bullard and Richard M. Felder (both in Engineering, North Carolina State University), Richard A. Layton (Engineering, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology), Hal R. Pomeranz (Deer Run Associates) and Douglas G. Schmucker (Zahl-Ford, Inc.).



The paper described the development and validation of an instrument for self- and peer-evaluation of students' contributions to teamwork in five key areas that research shows are important. The instrument is free for use by instructors in higher education on the website www.catme.org. The website also gives instructors free access to Team-Maker, a tool for assigning students to teams based on instructor-specified criteria. These instruments allow instructors to efficiently and confidentially collect information from their students in web-based surveys. The system gives instructors many options for using the information to form teams, adjust grades, and provide feedback to students. This material is based upon work supported by National Science Foundation grants.



4th Annual SoTL Commons Conference



The SoTL Commons

A Conference for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning

March 9-11, 2011

Georgia Southern University

Statesboro, Georgia, USA

<http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/ijsoil/conference/2011/index.htm>

The CTLS will host its **4th annual SoTL Commons**: A Conference for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning on March 9-11, 2011. Keynote speakers will be Jennifer Robinson (Indiana University), Richard Gale (Mount Royal University, CA), and Bill Cerbin (University of Wisconsin-La Crosse). Some of the schools represented by proposals are the University of Cincinnati, Western Oregon University, Mercer University, Middlebury College, St. Leo University, University of Georgia, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Georgia State University, Air Force Academy, University of New Orleans, South Dakota State University, Armstrong Atlantic State University, Columbus State University, Southeastern Louisiana University, Augusta State University, Aarhus University, Georgia Southern University, University of Alabama at Birmingham, Alverno College, University of South Carolina, University of Alabama, Western Carolina University, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Virginia Tech, University of Tennessee, University of Kansas, Marshall University, Simon Fraser University, University of Houston, Flagler College, Elon University.



There are two **pre-conference workshops**: 1) "Using Qualitative Research in the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning" and 2) "The Effective Management of Student Teams: Practice Informed by Research and Facilitated Using the CATME/Team-Maker System" See <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/ijsoil/conference/2011/workshops.htm>. There is also a **post-conference workshop** on March 12th on POGIL (at no cost).

SoTL: "A scholarship of teaching is *not* synonymous with excellent teaching. It requires a kind of "going meta," in which faculty frame and systematically investigate questions related to student learning—the conditions under which it occurs, what it looks like, how to deepen it, and so forth—and do so with an eye not only to improving their own classroom but to advancing practice beyond it." — Hutchings & Shulman

Faculty Learning Communities for SoTL

The FLC for SoTL began in 2006 and has been continuously meeting for five years. The FLC is always open for new members. More faculty than ever registered to join the 2010-2011 FLC for SoTL so that two separate FLCs for SoTL were formed.

FLC for SoTL-A:



The members are Jody Langdon (Health and Kinesiology), Nathan Palmer (Sociology & Anthropology), and Don Slater (Construction Management and Civil Engineering Technology). The facilitator, Jody Langdon, says that the

"SOTL A group is currently working on setting up a study to be conducted in the spring within Intro to Sociology courses. It concerns the use of team-based learning and providing detailed role delineation in each group. We have been meeting this semester to get a handle on SOTL research (as we are all brand new to it) and have been busily reading up on the topic. We hope to have an IRB written and submitted by the end of the semester."

FLC for SoTL-B:



The members are Trent Maurer (HTFCS), Diana Sturges (Health & Kinesiology), Deborah Allen (Nursing), Padmini Shankar (Health & Kinesiology) and Delena Bell Gatch (Physics). The FLC's facilitator, Trent Maurer says the following:

"This year, the FLC for SoTL (B) has four returning members (including one 5-year member and two 4-year members) and one new member. We will be conducting an original research project over the next six months investigating students' motivations for taking Anatomy & Physiology I and II. We hope to adapt existing measures that explore students' general motivation for attending college to the course level, limiting it to students in the allied health fields. This is the first disciplinary SoTL research project the FLC has investigated in its 5-year history. We hope to present our results in the spring at the SoTL Commons Conference, the SoTL Expo, and ultimately to submit it for publication."

5th Anniversary Issue



International Journal for the

Scholarship of Teaching & Learning

<http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/ijsotl/index.htm>



The special 5th Anniversary issue of *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning* will be published in January 2011 by the Center for Teaching, Learning & Scholarship. The journal is an open access, double-blind peer-reviewed, academic electronic journal and is international in its Review Board, authors, and readership. The issue will include Invited Essays, Research Articles, Essays About SoTL, Reflections, as well as new features such as 1) a **video clip** history of the journal, 2) **Feature Essays** by Pat Hutchings (Carnegie Foundation), Mary Taylor Huber (Carnegie Foundation) & Tony Ciccone (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), and one by Lee Shulman (former president of the Carnegie Foundation for the

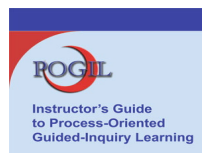
Advancement of Teaching), 3) **Essays by IJ-SoTL reviewers** on how to write SoTL articles for publication, and 4) **SoTL Mentors to the World** consisting of SoTL scholars available to mentor colleagues anywhere in the world about their SoTL ideas, projects, and applications. The SoTL Mentors are from Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Israel, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, UK and US (including one from Georgia Southern). The acceptance rate for the July 2010 issue was 11%.

SoTL Work of Faculty
Dr. Laura Frost (Chemistry)

In August 2010 I travelled to two conferences, the first was the Biennial Conference on Chemical Education held in Denton, TX where I delivered a talk on the development of the POGIL Faculty Learning Community (FLC) here at Georgia Southern (POGIL = **P**rocess **O**riented **G**uided **I**nquiry **L**earning). I also organized and presented at a second symposium on teaching chemistry to health professions students where many ideas were exchanged regarding course content, organization, and approach.



The second conference was the National American Chemical Society meeting held in Boston, MA where I delivered a talk discussing student learning in the biochemistry classroom using a POGIL approach, and a second talk with Dr. Michele McGibony discussing a bioanalytical laboratory course that we developed and was given during the NSF catalyzed curriculum session.



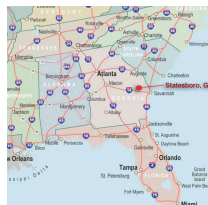
In October I travelled to Washington (state) to discuss teaching and learning in the health professions chemistry course at the Washington College Chemistry Teacher's Association annual meeting. I also spoke at the SoTL colloquy during the opening session on SoTL.

Currently I'm working on a set of guided inquiry activities for the health professions chemistry course to be published in January.

SoTL Symposium of the South

<http://ceps.georgiasouthern.edu/conted/sotlsymposium.html>

The inaugural, annual SoTL Symposium of the South was held on Friday, October 15, 2010 at Georgia Southern University for faculty and administrators at private and public colleges and universities in the southeastern region of the United States. The main focus of the Symposium was on ways to develop, design and complete SoTL projects (including dissemination via publication, presentation, etc., as well as practical applications to one's teaching and students), and practical ways for working to foster, support, and recognize SoTL. Attendees came from the following schools:



Armstrong Atlantic State University
Augusta State University
Barry University
College of Coastal Georgia
Columbus State University
Dalton State College
Emmanuel College
Florida International University
Gainesville State College
Georgia Institute of Technology

Georgia Perimeter College
Georgia Southern University
Jacksonville University
Lander University
Macon State College
Mercer University
Saint Leo University
Southern Polytechnic State University
University of South Carolina
Valdosta State University
Waycross College

Here are a few comments by attendees:

- For the very limited cost, I think this symposium was an extraordinary value.
- I look forward to the March conference, and to attending this symposium again. Thanks!
- I would recommend it to colleagues.
- I found the nuts and bolts "how to" sessions very helpful.
- All the presentations exceeded my expectations. Much learning that I can apply right away to my teaching practice...

SoTL: "The scholarship or teaching is integrating the experience of teaching with the scholarship of research. It is the ongoing and cumulative intellectual inquiry, through systematic observations and ongoing investigations by faculty, into the nature of learning and the impact of teaching on it." _ Hutchings & Shulman

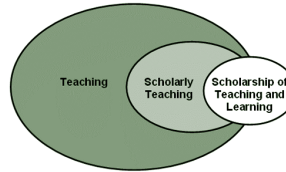
SoTL Work of Faculty
Dr. Hsiu-Lien Lu (Teaching and Learning)

Coverage of content is a continuous problem and concern for higher education instructors, novices and veterans alike. Inspired by literature that quizzes with modified forms and purposes might help resolve the problem, I conducted a study on the effects of pre-class online quizzing in my classes. The results indicated that pre-class online quizzing motivated students to read assigned texts, enhanced students' confidence in class discussion, and allowed more productive class time.



At the 2009 SoTL Commons Conference at Georgia Southern, this study was presented in a room filled with interested higher education faculty who excitedly exchanged thoughts with the presenter and shared problems in the classroom. This occurrence confirms the concern about the coverage of content by instructors who simultaneously are seeking to find effective measures to overcome it.

Providing a forum with tailored topics and interests for aspiring instructors, a SoTL conference forges opportunities for instructor-researchers both to contribute personal research projects and to participate in other presentations and become inspired about best teaching and learning practices that fit their disciplines. Teaching used to be considered a private endeavor behind the closed doors of classrooms, resulting in teacher isolation and lack of teacher sharing. The SoTL conference encourages instructor-researchers to bring ideas about how they can creatively overcome problems and share the results with many colleagues from around the country and world. This sharing permits a flow of ideas and information valuable to improve teacher teaching and student learning



SoTL Leadership Team

The SoTL Leadership Team's primary purpose is to actively collaborate with the Center for Teaching, Learning & Scholarship in guiding, supporting, and assessing the "SoTL at Georgia Southern" initiative. Members of the SoTL Leadership Team are **Kathy Albertson** (Writing & Linguistics), **Simone Charles** (Public Health), **Laura Frost** (Chemistry), **Delena Gatch** (Physics), **Lorraine Gilpin** (Teaching & Learning), and **Mark Hanna** (Finance and Quantitative Analysis). **Trent Maurer** (Hospitality, Tourism and Family & Consumer Sciences), **Laura Regassa** (Biology), and **Diana Sturges** (Health & Kinesiology). Please contact any of them with your questions about SoTL or the SoTL initiative at Georgia Southern.



Kathy Albertson



Simone Charles



Laura Frost



Delena Gatch



Lorraine Gilpin



Mark Hanna



Trent Maurer



Laura Regassa



Diana Sturges

SoTL: "Systematic reflection on teaching and learning made public." _ Illinois State University

SoTL Travelers

The SoTL Travelers is a group of Georgia Southern Faculty who are available to travel (real or virtual) to provide workshops, seminars, and keynote addresses on SoTL. At the end of September 2010, three Travelers—[Dr. Lorraine Gilpin \(Teaching & Learning\)](#), [Dr. Judith Longfield \(CTLIS\)](#) and [Dr. Diana Sturges \(Health & Kinesiology\)](#)—led a week-long online workshop arranged by the faculty center at Western Kentucky University. Entitled “The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Inquiring into Learning and Learning Communities,” participants from both WKU and Georgia Southern completed modules, participated in an online discussion, drafted SoTL projects, and received feedback on their proposed projects. In addition to citing “the structured process of developing a SoTL question” as an important outcome of the session, one participant demonstrated mastery of the workshop objective when s/he stated: “I can research what I am already doing (trying to improve my teaching) for publication purposes!” To view the learning modules created by the SoTL Travelers, visit <http://www.wku.edu/teaching/teachingissues/sotIGA1.htm>



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Call for SoTL Mentors at Georgia Southern

A new aspect of “SoTL at Georgia Southern” is to have a group of faculty experienced in doing SoTL research available to serve as SoTL Mentors to Georgia Southern colleagues (in person, or via email/phone, or both ways). The CTLIS will maintain a list of SoTL mentors on the SoTL at Georgia Southern website who may be contacted for SoTL consultation or mentoring. SoTL Mentors (on the website) can indicate if they are currently open to be contacted, or are currently mentoring to capacity. SoTL scholars are invited to volunteer to be SoTL Mentors by contacting Alan Altany at aaltany@georgiasouthern.edu.



SoTL Work of Faculty

Dr. Trent Maurer (Hospitality, Tourism and Family & Consumer Sciences)

This fall I am continuing or beginning several SoTL projects, but the one I am most excited about is a new two-year project to investigate the effectiveness of **Process Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning** [POGIL] in my Family Economics course. POGIL has been around for a while in the natural sciences, and has recently started to be adopted by other disciplines, but I’m not aware of anyone who has previously attempted to introduce it into Family Economics. My pilot work with the project last spring suggested that a number of students, though initially resistant, came to appreciate the method and subjectively perceived to have learned “more” and to have learned it “better” than when I taught the course via lecture. It is my hope that students will demonstrate greater mastery of the material and that the DFW rate in the course will significantly drop as a result of implementing POGIL.



Getting SoTL Articles Published - A Few Tips

By Kathleen McKinney, Cross Chair in SoTL, and Professor of Sociology, Illinois State University

Many faculty are involved in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). As with other forms of scholarship, SoTL requires that work be shared or made public. We urge SoTL researchers to publish their work. What follows is a list of suggestions for getting your articles published. [the editor has shortened the list which can be found in full at <http://www.sotlilstu.edu/resLinks/sotlMats/getPub.shtml>]

1. Think long and hard about the purpose of the article and the intended audience.
2. Investigate possible publication outlets (journals, scholarly magazines, newsletters, and edited books in progress) before you have “completed” the article. Consider your purpose, the mission of the publication, article restrictions, etc. Look for a good fit between your article and a publication outlet. Many journals have a page that explains their mission or the types of material they publish. In addition, you can look at the notes or articles published in recent issues. Consider whether a discipline-specific or more general pedagogical journal is most appropriate.

3. Unless you are specifically writing a very brief "teaching tips" note, don't simply describe something you have tried in the classroom and why you liked it. Most SoTL articles should have the following: a conceptual framework, a literature review, and some form of evidence. Exactly what this looks like, however, will vary by publication outlet, purpose/audience, and discipline.
4. Contact editors of outlets that look promising and ask if and how your article might fit in an upcoming regular issue, or whether they are planning or might consider a special issue on that topic.
5. Be sure any literature review is up-to-date and thorough. Be careful to cite any relevant work published in the same journal/magazine to which you plan to submit. Be sure to cite key people in the area.
6. Share your drafts with many people, get lots of reviews/feedback, do many rewrites. Don't expect journal reviewers to do this work!
7. Follow all directions and requirements for submission to the outlet you choose (e.g., length, format, number of copies, extra material, hard and/or electronic copies, name/address of contact person, due date if any). Editors find it very frustrating when potential authors do not follow basic directions.
8. After a reasonable period of time (find out the average number of weeks a review and editorial decision takes for that journal or outlet, then wait another two or three weeks), contact the editor and tactfully ask about the status of your article.
9. If accepted at this point, there will still probably be minor changes. Do those promptly and as requested. Return any page proofs within 48 hours and do a good job proof reading. Provide any other requested information (e.g., a brief bio) immediately. Find out if they want an electronic copy of the manuscript and in what format.
10. If you receive an editorial decision of conditional accept or revise and resubmit, read the reviews and decision letter carefully. Put them aside then read them again later. Ask a colleague to read them. If you have questions or get a sense that an acceptance after revisions is not likely, call the editor and talk about manuscript and the reviews.
11. If you proceed, make a list of what they are asking you to do. Give serious consideration to all their requests. Make a list of which you are able to do (sometimes reviewers ask authors to correct or change things they cannot correct or change). Make a list of which you agree with and plan to do. Make a list of which you cannot or choose not to do and why.
12. Write a resubmit letter to the editor and reviewer. Be positive. Indicate all the requested changes and corrections you made and how (briefly) you made them. List all the requested changes and corrections you did not make and explain why you did not. Be tactful but confident. In some situations, this letter can be as important as the revised manuscript.
13. If you receive another revise and resubmit, you probably need to talk with the editor. Discuss the reviews. Try to get a sense of the likelihood of acceptance if you do another revise and resubmit. Then make a decision of whether to revise or to withdraw your manuscript and submit to another publication outlet.
14. If rejected, go to your second choice publication outlet. Don't wait too long. Update the manuscript based on the latest reviews AND adjusting it in line with mission, format, discourse, etc. of this other outlet. Update your literature review. Do not submit to a different journal without revising your manuscript. Revisions will improve the paper and you could receive one of the same reviewers again. Begin the submission process again.
15. Be persistent!

SoTL Resources

Wikipedia Entry on SoTL: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scholarship_of_teaching_and_learning

SoTL (Vanderbilt): <http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/teaching-guides/reflecting/sotl/#what1>

SoTL by Discipline: <http://www.sotl.ilstu.edu/support/>

Bloom's Digital Taxonomy: <http://edorigami.wikispaces.com/Bloom%27s+Digital+Taxonomy>

Publication Outlets: http://www4.uwm.edu/sotl/help_support/pub_outlets/index.cfm?a1=search

Tutorial on the What/Why/How of SoTL: <http://www.issotl.org/tutorial/sotltutorial/home.html>

SoTL: "The scholarship of teaching and learning is rigorous and thoughtful investigation of student learning, with the results made available for public review and use beyond a local setting. It is first and foremost a commitment to the improvement of student learning, made possible through individual and collective knowledge-building." _ Carnegie Foundation

The *SoTL Chronicles* is edited by Alan Altany of the CTLIS. If you have any information, comments, ideas, or projects connected with the SoTL for possible inclusion in a future issue, please send them to aaltany@georgiasouthern.edu.